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PINR, AMGT, TF, BE

SUBJECT: BELGIUM: GOB ESTIMATES 15,671 NEW H1N1 CASES OCTOBER 12 TO 18, TOTAL ABOVE 35,000

REF: BRUSSELS 1400

¶1. On October 22, the Government of Belgium's Interministerial Influenza Commission (IIC) announced an estimated 15,671 new cases of the H1N1 virus in Belgium for the week of October 12 to 18, continuing an increasing trend over the last three weeks. The total estimated number of cases in Belgium since the H1N1 outbreak began in April 2009 is now 35,771. Five people have died from complications of the H1N1 virus. To compare, there were an estimated 7,534 new cases of H1N1 in Belgium for the week of October 5 to 11, 4,160 the week of September 28 to October 4, and 1,792 estimated positive cases the week of September 21-27. The October 12-18 estimates were based on extrapolations of 39,809 patient consultations with the H1N1 network. Belgium ceased testing individuals in July 2009, when the World Health Organization declared that H1N1 virus had reached the pandemic level, and since then has used its system for estimating positive cases, which relies on data based on cases of patients who visit the approximately 180 doctors who make up the national H1N1 network.

¶2. Belgium is currently in a first epidemic phase for H1N1, according to projections of the Belgian Scientific Institute of Public Health. The IIC indicates that the number of people affected by H1N1 in Belgium is rand the epidemic hast had a signiftion.

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